

#### IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:  
data reading means for reading character data from at least one inserted trading card under control of a CPU; and  
payout means for paying out at least one reward trading card under control of the CPU,

wherein a set of character data of the at least one reward trading card is determined by combining the read character data, when stores updated character data on a basis of both a status of a game and the character data read by the data reading means, the status is the prescribed conditions that are satisfied in the game.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the payout means includes writing means for writing ~~the~~ updated character data in the at least one reward trading card, the updated character data being based on results of the game.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the character data includes capability and attribute values.

6. (Original) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the payout means includes printing means for printing an image on a surface of the at least one reward trading card.

7. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:  
three slots into which a plurality of trading cards can be inserted, each trading

card storing a set of character data:

a card reader which reads character data from at least one inserted trading card;

~~a card writer which writes updated character data on at least one reward trading card~~ a payout device for paying out a reward trading card; and

a controller which executes a predetermined computer program, the controller being connected to the card reader and the card writer,

wherein the controller causes the card reader to read the character data from ~~the at least one inserted trading card, causes a game to advance on a basis of the character data read by the card reader, determines the set of character data of the reward trading card by combining the read character data, and causes the payout device to pay out the reward trading card~~ writer to write the updated character data on a basis of both a status of the game and the character data read by the card reader, the status is the prescribed conditions that are satisfied in the game.

8. (Canceled)

9. (New) A method for controlling a gaming machine, comprising steps of:

reading character data from at least one trading card;

receiving an instruction of combining the character data, when a prescribed condition is satisfied in a game;

combining the read character data to determine at least one set of updated character data; and

writing the set of updated character data to at least one reward trading card;

wherein one set of character data is determined by combining two sets of read character data.

10. (New) The method for controlling the gaming machine according to claim

9, further comprising steps of:

advancing a game based on the character data; and

changing the character data based on results of the game.

11. (New) A gaming machine comprising:

three slots into which at least two trading cards can be inserted, each of the trading card storing a set of character data;

a card reader which reads character data from the inserted trading cards;

a payout device for paying out a reward trading card; and

a controller which executes a predetermined computer program, the controller being connected to the card reader and the payout device,

wherein the controller causes the card reader to read the character data, determines the set of character data of the reward trading card by combining the read character data, and causes the payout device to pay out the reward trading card.